



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Drying Flood-damaged Books and Family Papers

- Papers and books that have been exposed to flood water are fragile, very likely to mold, and difficult to dry successfully.
- Individual papers that are damp or wet around the edges can be spread face-up on a paper-covered flat surface and air-dried. The temperature and humidity should be kept as low as possible to discourage mold growth.
- Books with non-coated paper, if not overly wet, can be stood on end and fanned open to air-dry. Put paper towels between every few pages to help wick out the water, and change the towels regularly until the pages are dry. Keep air moving but do not face a fan directly toward the items. Air-drying a book this way can take several weeks.
- Very wet papers and books, if found within 24 hours, can be placed in plastic bags and frozen. This will allow you additional time to work on them, and it will help to control mold growth.
- Once dry, books may be placed in a closed container with moth crystals to help stop mold growth.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Minnesota Extension Service entitled "Weather Impacts: Flood and Rain" and the Florida Extension Service entitled "The Disaster Handbook"